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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/758,381	01/10/2001	Richard L. Watson		9087

7590 04/01/2003
Richard L. Watson
1985 Cougar Trail
McPherson, KS 67460

EXAMINER

HOEY, ALISSA L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3765 7
DATE MAILED: 04/01/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/758,381	WATSON, RICHARD L. <i>WT</i>
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Alissa L. Hoey	3765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 February 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 25 February 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shubert (US 2,811,969) in view of Cote (US 3,749,099).

Shubert provides an amniotic sac-rupturing device having an elongate, flexible shank having a proximal end and a distal end (column 1, lines 15-55). A sharp point mounted on the distal end of the shank, suitable for puncturing an amniotic sac (figure 3). The point is positioned against the face of a fingertip of a physician's hand (figures 1-3). A ring connected to the shank and the ring being positioned relative to the shank and adapted to secure the hand to a midsection of the physician's finger (46). However, Shubert fails to teach the sharp point facing rearward and the proximal end of the device resting in the palm of the physician's hand. Further, Shubert fails to teach the point formed at the tip of a hook having a shielded cutting edge and the leading edge of the hook being flush with a surface of the distal end. The hook is positioned in a recess in the distal end. Cote provides an amniotic sac-rupturing device having a rearward facing cutting element (26). The cutting point formed at the tip of a hook having a

shielded cutting edge and the leading edge of the hook being flush with a surface of the distal end (figure 1 and 4).

It would have been obvious to form the proximal end of the device of Shubert to rest in the palm of a physician's hand, since nothing prevents the device from doing so based upon the length of the shank and the physician's hand.

It would have been further obvious to have provided the amniotic sac-rupturing device of Shubert with the rearward facing cutting element of Cotey, since the rearward facing cutting element and the shielded cutting edge prevents inadvertent cutting before or after sac rupturing.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alissa L. Hoey whose telephone number is (703) 308-6094. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-5:30)Second Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Calvert can be reached on (703) 305-1025. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-0758 for regular communications and (703) 308-0758 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0861.

alh
March 25, 2003



GLORIA M. HALE
PRIMARY EXAMINER